The 32nd Annual Pacifica Synod Assembly was once again held on the campus of Hope Lutheran Church in Palm Desert. The expansive church campus and warm hospitality of the members of Hope Lutheran provided the perfect location for our synod to gather. We are extremely grateful for the hard work of Hope’s pastors, staff and congregation prior to, during and following the assembly.

Prior to the opening of the assembly on Friday, a pre-assembly wine and cheese reception was held on Thursday evening, allowing assembly participants to check-in early, visit displays and enjoy being in fellowship with one another.

Our theme of “O Lord, Open My Ears: Listening to God While Listening to Each Other” shaped our time together through speakers, table conversations, theme videos, ministry partners and opportunities for assembly participants to respond and ask questions of presenters in new ways. We were provided with tools to assist with active listening skills and having “holy” conversations.

The ELCA’s Churchwide Representative for this assembly was Ms. Kathryn Johnson, ELCA Director for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations. Keynote addresses were shared by Dr. Brian J. Collins, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks and Dr. John Arthur Nunes, President of Concordia College New York in Bronxville. Something new this year was an interview/response time after each speaker’s presentation led by Synod Council Vice-President, Ms. Lori Herman.

Music and song were shared to gather us all together as well as in Bible study. Business of the assembly was conducted through elections, resolutions, budget approval and conference meetings. Reports were shared, grant recipients celebrated and ministries lifted up. We ended our time together on Friday with a contemplative and inspiring Taizé service.

We give thanks to all who with us for this assembly. Your participation and dedication to the ministries of and through this synod are a gift to us and the wider church. We also are grateful for those who held the assembly in prayer. We especially give thanks for the village it takes to hold a synod assembly - our Assembly Planning Team, Synod Council, worship team and the MANY on-site volunteers and staff from the two local congregations (Hope and St. John’s) and elsewhere.
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS & ELCA CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE

ELCA Churchwide representative, Ms. Kathryn Johnson shared the ELCA’s annual report which included statistics and updates from a wide variety of Churchwide ministries. She also shared Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton’s report to synod assemblies, highlighting several ministries working cooperatively with other organizations in their communities, reminding us that we are church together for the sake of the world. On Saturday, Kathryn reminded us that “faith gives us what skills themselves don’t produce.”

On Friday afternoon, Dr. Brian Collins spoke about the “Art of Listening” and how philosophy might help us navigate difficult dialogues. Philosophy starts from a place of wonder and requires humility and patience. He stressed that productive dialogue requires authentic speaking AND listening from the heart, sharing helpful steps in the process of authentic and intentional listening. He concluded his time with table conversations allowing participants to practice some of these skills.

On Saturday afternoon, Dr. John Nunes’ presentation on “Pluralism & Privilege” was delivered with honesty, humor, and passion. He described the differences between the way we listen in a discussion, a debate, and in dialogue. He shared a quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s, “Christians who can no longer listen to one another will soon no longer be listening to God either”, highlighting the importance of our ability to listen. According to Nunes, the church ought to be a “Recombobulation Area”, a place where you’re put back together again from the discombobulation of the world. Finally, we were reminded that God expects us to use our privilege to make a difference and in service to the world.

After Dr. Nunes finished his presentation, his wife, Monique, treated us to a beautiful and powerful performance of the song, “Center of My Joy”. What an unexpected gift this was!
During the assembly, we had the opportunity to recognize congregations and organizations who received synod and ELCA grants in 2018-2019:

- **Top** — Warner Trust Grants for youth and education programs
- **Below Left & Right**—Murray & Rhoda Finck Global Engagement Mission Fund Grants to assist with global mission efforts
- **Right**—Catherine Wright Stephen Ministry Scholarship Awards for Stephen Ministry Lay Leaders
- **Bottom Left & Right**—Matthew 25 Grants to help the hungry, homeless and others in need

We give thanks for the varied ministries of the congregations in the Pacifica Synod and for the opportunity to contribute funding grants and scholarships through the synod to help congregations establish and maintain ministries in their communities.
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

To Right: Celebrating 25 years of ordained ministry, the Rev. Jonathan Doolittle. Others rostered ministers celebrating their 25th anniversary of ordination who could not attend were: the Rev. Ron Hovick, the Rev. Franklin Xiao Wen Jiang, the Rev. Dan Raaen, and the Rev. Kate Schlechter.

The assembly also celebrated the 50th anniversary of ordination of two rostered ministers who could not attend: the Rev. Noel Estergren and the Rev. John Lundblad.

SYNOD COUNCIL

Above: On Saturday, 2019-2020 Pacifica Synod Council members were installed. Below: On Thursday, May 9, the Synod Council met and the following outgoing Council members were recognized for their service on Council: Jan Neuhaus (top left), the Rev. Kim Krogstad (top right), Paul Coulter (bottom left) and Emily Erisman (bottom right).

We are thankful for the leadership provided during the assembly by our Synod Council Vice President, Lori Herman (above left) and Treasurer, Tom Pankow (above right).
SYNOD ASSEMBLY ACTIONS

SA.19.05.01 VOTED to approve the rules for the 2019 Pacifica Synod Assembly.

Synod Council Recommendations:
Baseline Salary Increase for Rostered Leaders
SA.19.05.02 VOTED to accept the recommendation of Pacifica Synod Council for a 2% increase in the Baseline Salary for Rostered Leaders (Ministers of Word and Sacrament) of the Pacifica Synod for the year 2020.

Adoption of Agenda
SA.19.05.03 VOTED to adopt the agenda for the 2019 Pacifica Synod Assembly.

Resolutions:
Resolution 19-04:
SA.19.05.04 VOTED to remove the resolution from the table.
Resolution 19-04 was adopted by consensus of the assembly.

Resolution 19-01:
SA.19.05.05 VOTED to pass Resolution 19-01, Pacifica Synod Compensation Guidelines for Word & Service.

Resolutions 19-02 and 19-03:
SA.19.05.06 VOTED to remove these resolutions from the table en bloc.

SA.19.05.07 VOTED to pass Resolution 19-02, Ongoing Support and Memorial Follow-through for ELCA Federal Chaplaincy, Military Personnel, Veterans and Their Families.

SA.19.05.08 VOTED to pass Resolution 19-03, Full Participation of All Rostered Leaders in Equity, Diversity and Anti-Racism Training Events.

Resolutions 19-05 and 19-06:
SA.19.05.09 VOTED to remove these resolutions from the table en bloc.

SA.19.05.10 VOTED to pass Resolution 19-05, Inclusive and Expansive Language for Humankind and God.

SA.19.05.11 VOTED to reject the amendment to Resolution 19-06.

SA.19.05.12 VOTED to postpone the vote on Resolution 19-06 until Saturday morning.

Resolution 19-06 (Saturday):
SA.19.05.14 VOTED to pass Resolution 19-06, Support of Proposed Social Statement “Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action”

Synod Budget:
SA.19.05.13 VOTED to approve the 2020-2021 Budget.

TABLE CONVERSATIONS & FELLOWSHIP
**SYNOD ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS**

**SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTION RESULTS**

San Diego Area Representative—Lay, Male  
Mr. Jeff Cours: 95 (elected)

San Diego Area Representative—Lay, Female  
Ms. Becky Draper: 58 (elected)

Ms. Esmeralda Vences: 35

Orange County Area Representative—Lay, Female  
Ms. Greta Goellrich: 86 (elected)

Inland Empire Area Representative—Lay, Female  
Ms. Nicolette Rohr: 71 (elected)

Inland Empire Area Representative—Lay, Male  
Mr. Anthony Eder: 70 (elected)

Inland Empire Area Representative—Clergy, Any  
The Rev. Dianne Finnecy: 29

The Rev. Jennifer Shaw: 36 (elected)

Hawaii Area Representative—Clergy, Any Gender  
The Rev. Jeff Lilley: 26 (elected)

Youth Representative—Any Gender  
Ms. Freya Hendrickson: 277 (elected)

Treasurer—Any Gender  
Mr. Tom Pankow: 274 (elected)

**SYNOD COMMITTEES ELECTION RESULTS**

Mission Funds Committee
Mr. Allan Griesemar: 79  
Mr. Marc Portillo: 109

Mr. Paul Coulter: 176 (elected)  
Mr. James Grutkowski: 144 (elected)  
Ms. Sheila Wenzel: 251 (elected)

Consultation Committee—Lay, Female  
Ms. Joanne Manzi: 269 (elected)  
Ms. Meri Jo Petrivelli: 268 (elected)

Consultation Committee—Lay, Male  
Mr. Scott Anderson: 271 (elected)  
Mr. Dennis Heider: 263 (elected)

**IT TAKES A VILLAGE!**

[Images of people at an event]
On Thursday afternoon, we had the opportunity to worship in Hope Lutheran’s beautiful sanctuary. There we experienced a contemplative Taizé service, led by gifted worship leaders and musicians, with powerful prayers, an inspiring message from Bishop Andy Taylor, and the sharing of the meal together. Our thanks to all who planned, organized and led these inspiring worship services for our synod assembly participants and the community.
Please use this resource to help you report back to your congregation on the business of the Pacifica Synod Assembly. Videos of many of the assembly business sessions may be found on the Pacifica Synod YouTube channel.

Special thanks to Angela Jackson, Synod Council Secretary for her help in reporting for the assembly. Photo credit to Paul Coulter (Resurrection, Huntington Beach) and Jeremy Kaercher (Welcome Ministry, El Cajon).

We also thank Eric Renn from Big Dog Sound, along with Pastor Brenda Bos (Christ, San Clemente), Pastor Manuel Retamaosa (St. Andrew’s, San Diego), Pastor Daren Erisman (House of Prayer, Escondido), Dale Feine, and Nathan Maxwell-Doherty for their work with our assembly audio/visual production.

For questions, feedback or more information, please contact Terri Robertson, Pacifica Synod Administrative Assistant for Communications & Accounting at terrirobertson@pacificasynod.org.